

South Dakota Principal Effectiveness Pilot

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will all schools in the district be required to participate in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot?

There are two application levels: district-level and school-level applications. District-level applications will be required to evaluate all principals to be evaluated using multiple measures of professional practice and student growth. School-level applications, which may only be made by schools that have separately applied to participate in the 2013-14 Teacher Effectiveness Pilot, will only be required to evaluate the principal(s) employed at the school making the application. Given common elements shared by both the principal and teacher effectiveness evaluation systems, participation in both pilots is encouraged.

Why should my district consider participating in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot?

South Dakota's application for ESEA Flexibility requires the state to develop a comprehensive principal evaluation system for implementation in 2014-15, when new federal reporting requirements must include data on principal effectiveness. Participating in the pilot provides districts with practical experience prior to statewide implementation and establishes a thoughtful feedback mechanism to inform changes to the state model.

How will pilot districts incorporate student growth as one measure of principal effectiveness?

Pilot districts are encouraged to incorporate two quantitative measures of student growth into the evaluation system. The first measure, weighted at 75 percent of a principal's student growth rating, quantifies the impact a principal has on leading teachers through the process of establishing and accomplishing Student Learning Targets (SLTs). The second measure requires principals, in cooperation with district superintendents, to set school-level growth goals based either on the School Performance Index (SPI) or on progress narrowing the achievement gap. A Principal Effectiveness Handbook distributed to pilot districts will provide guidance on how to incorporate quantitative measures of student growth.

To participate in the pilot, will district teachers be asked to develop Student Learning Targets?

Yes. To participate in the pilot, district-level applicants must ensure that each principal evaluated establishes Student Learning Targets (SLTs) with a minimum of 25 percent of the teachers under the supervision of the principal. School-level participants, though their work in the Teacher Effectiveness Pilot Project, will also work with teachers to establish SLTs. A SLT is a teacher-driven goal or set of goals that establish expectations for student academic growth over a specified period of time. For the purpose of principal evaluation, the percentage of teachers that meet established SLTs will be used as one measure of principal effectiveness.

Who developed the evaluation system that pilot schools will be using?

In June 2012, a Principal Evaluation Work Group began work on a recommended evaluation system. The group developed standards and indicators of performance, and also commissioned the development of rubrics to guide professional practice evaluation. The work continued in 2013, when a group of principals, operating as a subcommittee of the Commission on Teaching and Learning, formed recommendations on how to incorporate student growth as a measure of principal effectiveness.

How will measures of professional practice and student growth be combined to create a summative rating that differentiates principal performance?

Pilot districts will be encouraged to assign principal one rating for professional teaching practice and one rating for student growth. The two separate ratings will be combined into a final summative rating. The summative rating will translate into one of three performance categories: Below Expectations, Meets Expectations or Exceeds Expectations. Emphasis is first placed on the professional teaching practice rating, and the student growth score is used as a check of the evaluation system. A Principal Effectiveness Handbook will be distributed to pilot districts to provide guidance and recommendations on how to assign a summative rating.